

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION  
JOINTLY WITH COMMITTEE ON CIVIL  
SERVICE AND LABOR

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April 12, 2018  
Start: 1:10 p.m.  
Recess: 3:16 p.m.

HELD AT: 250 BROADWAY - COMMITTEE RM 14<sup>TH</sup> FL

B E F O R E:

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Inez D. Barron  
Laurie A. Cumbo  
Robert F. Holden  
Ben Kallos  
Ydanis A. Rodriguez

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

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(ready ready, gavel banging)

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CHAIR INEZ BARRON: Good afternoon and welcome today's oversight hearing on the CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies. I am Council Member, Inez Barron, Chair of the Committee on Higher Education and a proud alum from Hunter College, Class of January 1967. We are joined by the Committee on Civil Service and Labor, Chaired by my esteem colleague, Council Member I. Daneek Miller of Queens. The Higher Education Committee serves as the Council's oversight committee regarding funding and other issues related to the CUNY System while the Civil Service and Labor Committee has jurisdiction over issues relating to collective bargaining, labor relations and labor services for the City of New York. As such, a joint hearing on today's topic is important to the work of our respective Committees. Witnesses invited to testify today include representatives from CUNY, the New York City Office of Labor Relations and the New York State Department of Labor as well as CUNY's Professional Staff, Congress, Student Groups, Higher Education and Labor Advocates, Labor Units, Academic Institutions and other interested parties. In addition to the new

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2 school of Labor and Urban Studies we will two  
3 resolutions that are at appo to the topic of Labor  
4 Studies, resolution #190 introduced by Council  
5 Members Torres, Miller, Lander, Rivera and Drum,  
6 would call upon U.S. Supreme Court to protect labor  
7 sector collective bargaining in the case of Janus vs.  
8 American Federation of State, County and Municipal  
9 Employees (AFSCME) and Resolution 240 introduced by  
10 Council Member Miller would acknowledge the worker's  
11 gains through the American Labor Movement. Before I  
12 continue, I would like to turn the floor over to  
13 Council Member Miller, Chair of the Committee on  
14 Civil Service and Labor for his remarks concerning  
15 these resolutions.

16 CHAIR I. DANEEK MILLER: Good afternoon,  
17 thank you Council Member. Good afternoon, thank you  
18 once again to everyone for being here. My name is  
19 Council Member I. Daneek Miller and I am in the Chair  
20 of the Committee on Civil Service and Labor. I would  
21 like to thank my esteemed colleague from Brooklyn,  
22 Council Member Barron for her mutual interest in  
23 conducting today's joint hearing on the forthcoming  
24 CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies. As stated,  
25 we will also hear two resolutions of concern to the

1  
2 Labor Movement. First resolution, 190 of 2018 co-  
3 sponsored by Council Member Torres and myself is of  
4 the utmost importance in light of the Janus vs.  
5 AFSCME Supreme Court decision hearing that was heard  
6 this past February. The outcome of this case could  
7 adversely affect Unions across the nation,  
8 particularly here in our Union dense City. The  
9 ruling in favor of the Plaintiff of Mark Janus would  
10 compromise the ability of Unions to collect the  
11 agency fee and the Union Due from and Dues from  
12 paying members to support the time and personnel cost  
13 entailed within Collective Bargaining in ensuring  
14 that employees are in compliance with such agreement.  
15 This could severely depressed Union's membership  
16 across the country in creating a free ride program  
17 problem which is why it is so important for us here  
18 in New York City to show our support for Unions and  
19 Collective Bargaining Process that enables them to  
20 negotiate for fair wages, benefits, pensions and  
21 working conditions for all of their members. The  
22 second resolution we are introducing in Resolution  
23 #240 which acknowledges worker's gains through the  
24 American Labor Movement over the course of our  
25 country's history. As a sponsor of this resolution I

1  
2 believe it is important to understand the profound  
3 legacy of the American Labor Movement in light of  
4 Janus vs. AFSCME, we must look to our past to  
5 recognize how far we have turned in terms of  
6 obtaining better wages, benefit, pension and working  
7 conditions for the American Worker. I look forward  
8 to examining the progressions and establishing the  
9 new CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies and hear  
10 from CUNY on the current status of this transition as  
11 it is our understanding that the school will be fully  
12 operational for the upcoming 2019 Academic Year. We  
13 would also score how the school will help to enhance  
14 the Murphy Institute, Existing Programs and  
15 contribute to the promoting educational opportunities  
16 for New York City Worker's. The CUNY School of Labor  
17 and Urban Studies will be on par with other CUNY  
18 Schools oriented toward working professionals. The  
19 school would expand higher education opportunities  
20 for workers in ways that would be providing, would be  
21 providing new career opportunities, secure employment  
22 and promote upward mobility. It would also help the  
23 City meet its 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce needs. The  
24 Murphy Institute has served the needs of workers in  
25 the City of New York for over three decades and CUNY

1  
2 School will continue to serve their need while also  
3 providing new and exciting possibilities and  
4 opportunities. Finally I would like to acknowledge  
5 the members of the Committee that are here and they  
6 just right on time. Start with Council Member  
7 Masail. We have just been joined by Council Member  
8 Adams and Council Member King. Thank you so much and  
9 with that I return you back to my esteemed colleague  
10 from Brooklyn.

11 CHAIR INEZ BARRON: Thank you Council  
12 Member Miller, I wish to echo your sentiments as to  
13 the importance of the issues raised by Resolutions  
14 190 and 240. I would like also to acknowledge that  
15 we are holding this hearing today, more than two  
16 years since our Committees last conducted or joint  
17 hearing and received testimony regarding the  
18 establishment of the Murphy Institute as a new CUNY  
19 School of Labor and Urban Studies. At that time, we  
20 recognized that the Murphy Institute was founded over  
21 30 years ago but continued to be housed within CUNYs  
22 School of Professional Studies which is part of the  
23 Graduate School and University Center and today the  
24 institute has yet to operate on its own school within  
25 CUNY Governance structure. Despite having such an

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2 esteem Labor Studies Program and successfully  
3 educating many thousands of students and  
4 professionals during its 30 plus year run. The  
5 program has and continues to represent a great  
6 opportunity for many working class individuals and  
7 recognize the challenges that they face and enables  
8 them to expand the education without stopping work.  
9 Indeed, to have a program focused on labor for those  
10 who labor allows CUNY consistent with its mission to  
11 reach a body of people previously marginalized from  
12 educational opportunities. While the testimony at  
13 our last hearing was largely favorable toward the  
14 Murphy Institute, it was disheartening to learn that  
15 a Task Force of three people established by CUNY to  
16 examine the elevation of the institute to a new  
17 school, fail to see the merit in such an elevation.  
18 A lot has happened since then. Since then, CUNYs  
19 Governing Board of Trustees finally saw the merit of  
20 elevating the Institute to a new CUNY School and in  
21 June 2017 it approved a resolution directing the  
22 Chancellor to implement a transition plan subject to  
23 financial ability that would revise CUNYs Governance  
24 Documents and finally give the Institute the status  
25 of a school that it has earned and indeed deserves.

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2 According to meeting minutes of the Board of  
3 Trustees, the transition process was to commence June  
4 26, 2017, some 10 months ago. That was a significant  
5 step but requires many more to bring this plan to  
6 tuition. At today's hearing, the Committees will  
7 examine what steps have been taken toward a  
8 transition process and when the new school will be  
9 ready to enroll students. We will also examine what  
10 financial resource have been provided by the State,  
11 City or other sources in furtherance of the ed  
12 transition and whether this support will enable the  
13 new school to hit the ground running once it is fully  
14 operational. I want to acknowledge my colleagues on  
15 the Higher Education Committee who are present and we  
16 have Council Member Holden. I would also like to  
17 thank Joyce Simmons, my Chief of Staff, Indigo  
18 Washington my Director of Legislation, Chloe Rivera  
19 the Committee's Policy Analyst, Jessica Ackerman the  
20 Committee's Senior Finance Analyst and Paul Senicar  
21 (SP?) Council to the Committee. And at this time we  
22 are going to call the first panel and then we will  
23 have the Oath Administered by the Counsel. Okay so  
24 we will just do this too. And we are going to hear  
25 from Vice-Chancellor Matthew Sapienza, Chief

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2 Financial Officer and Vice-Chancellor Vita Rabinowitz  
3 University Provost. If you would raise your right  
4 hand please the Counsel will administer the oath.

5 COUNSEL: Yes in accordance with the  
6 rules of the Council I will administer the  
7 affirmation to the witnesses from the Mayoral  
8 Administration. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the  
9 whole truth and nothing but the truth in your  
10 testimony before this Committee and to respond  
11 honestly to Council Members questions?

12 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Yes.

13 COUNSEL: Please state your names for the  
14 record?

15 VITA RABINOWITZ: I am Vita Rabinowitz,  
16 Executive Vice Chancellor in University Provost at  
17 the City University of New York

18 MATTHEW SAPIENZA: Matthew Sapienza,  
19 Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer at  
20 CUNY.

21 COUNSEL: Thank you, you may begin.

22 VITA RABINOWITZ: Thank you, good  
23 afternoon Chair Barron, Chair Miller and members of  
24 the City Council Subcommittee on Higher Education and  
25 Civil Service and Labor. I am as I stated Vita

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2 Rabinowitz, Executive Vice Chancellor in University  
3 Provost at CUNY and I am pleased to come before you  
4 with my colleague, Senior Vice Chancellor, so, sorry,  
5 I yes. Okay, okay, alright. You bet. Good  
6 afternoon Chair Barron, Chair Miller and members of  
7 the City County Subcommittees on Higher Education and  
8 Civil Service and Labor. I am Vita Rabinowitz  
9 Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost of  
10 the City University of New York and I am pleased to  
11 come before you with my colleague, Matt Sapienza  
12 Senior Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance to  
13 report on our progress on the transition of the  
14 Murphy Institute to the CUNY School of Labor and  
15 Urban Studies. Before addressing that, if I may, I  
16 want to take the opportunity to thank the Council,  
17 and particularly you, Chair Barron for your critical,  
18 just in time support for CUNYs efforts to reform the  
19 Developmental Education Programs. Thanks to the  
20 Council's generous investment over the past year we  
21 have been able to deliver more test prep and expand  
22 precollege efforts like CUNY Start and we are placing  
23 fewer students into remedial or developmental  
24 education. We are also developing new paths to  
25 college proficiency. These initiatives enable

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2 students to earn college credit sooner, save their  
3 financial aid for credit bearing options and enable  
4 students to make better progress toward degrees. We  
5 have come far but we have much farther to go but  
6 again we thank the Council for enabling us to bring  
7 our innovates to scale. Now to the matter at hand,  
8 the transition of the Joseph S. Murphy Institute to  
9 the CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies. I am  
10 pleased to tell you that we have made great progress  
11 over the past year and we are, we are on our way to  
12 realizing the dream of so many in this room to  
13 establish a great public labor school in the labor  
14 capital of our nation. Specifically the new CUNY  
15 School of Labor and Urban Studies seeks to accomplish  
16 the following: Provide undergraduate and graduate  
17 education in Labor Studies including a specialization  
18 in Labor Relations. Provide undergraduate and  
19 graduate education in Urban Studies including  
20 specializations in Public Policy and Public  
21 Relations, increase higher education opportunities  
22 for workers providing them with the knowledge and  
23 skills necessary for personal growth, career  
24 advancement and economic mobility while also  
25 addressing work force needs of the City and State.

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2 And finally to create new knowledge in Labor and  
3 Urban Studies through basic and applied research and  
4 scholarship. We are fortunate Council Members in  
5 having the complete support of our Board of Trustees  
6 and the Chancellory in this work, not to mention the  
7 strong support of National and Local Labor Leaders  
8 and Elected Officials throughout the city and state.  
9 We are grateful for their support and we appreciate  
10 that the hopes of many are riding our efforts and  
11 depend on our success in this transition. Our goal  
12 is for the Murphy Institute to open its door as the  
13 CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies on August 29,  
14 2018 so this year. From the start of our work I have  
15 had key consultations with the following. I meet  
16 regularly with the Labor Advisory Board, consult  
17 regularly with the Director, now Founding Dean Dr.  
18 Greg Mantsios, have had meetings with the Chair of  
19 the Labor Advisory Board, the President of the  
20 Graduate Center where the new school will be housed  
21 and also the Dean of the School of Professional  
22 Studies from whence the new school came. I formed  
23 and chaired a visioning committee composed of faculty  
24 from Labor and Urban Studies both within and beyond  
25 CUNY, Labor Leaders, a CUNY College President and

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2 Central Office Personnel to help us position the new  
3 school in the global, national and local domains of  
4 Labor and Urban Studies to surface some of the  
5 questions, the issues, the challenges and the  
6 opportunities that a new school will face. I met  
7 with the Murphy Faculty including Central  
8 Appointments, Jointly Appointed and Consortial (SP?)  
9 Faculty to explore their aspirations for and their  
10 concerns about the new school. Shortly after this  
11 work and frankly throughout this work we have come to  
12 organize our progress as follows: We have  
13 established a Committee and Various Subcommittees of  
14 Murphy Faculty and Staff to oversee the transition  
15 process. A team of central office staff which  
16 includes an Associate of Provost for Planning who  
17 reports directly to me and who is here with us today,  
18 uhm assigned to help oversee and facilitate the  
19 transition and there was a cross campus working group  
20 of 18 members which meets weekly to develop and  
21 implement this transition plan. What have we  
22 accomplished? Well with respect to new personnel  
23 appointments we have appointed Dr. Gregory Mantsios,  
24 long time Director of the Joseph S. Murphy Institute  
25 as the founding dean of the new school effective

1  
2 January 26, 2018. We have appointed two new faculty  
3 as distinguished lecturers. New and full time and  
4 part time staff have been added to the Murphy staff  
5 during the transition. These include a full-time  
6 Information Technologist and part-time specialist in  
7 Human Resources, the offices of the Bursar and Budget  
8 and Finance. With respect to key actions regarding  
9 accreditation and the New York State Education  
10 Department has authorized CUNY to establish the new  
11 school as an urban campus of the graduate center of  
12 CUNY. The higher education services corps has agreed  
13 to issue new codes that will allow students in the  
14 new school to receive financial aid. Murphy Faculty  
15 and staff are participating in the graduate center's  
16 current review by the Middle State's Commission on  
17 Higher Education, the accrediting body of our region  
18 and the body whose seven standards all units must  
19 meet in order to meet accreditation. With respect to  
20 how the new school will be governed. A Murphy  
21 Institute Faculty Staff Governance Committee has been  
22 established and it has created a draft governance  
23 plan that was submitted to the central office. That  
24 document is currently under review with the aim of  
25 getting it finalized in time for submission to the

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2 Board of Trustees in June of 2018. With respect to  
3 Academic Programs and Policies, new articulation  
4 agreements that will facilitate the transfer of  
5 courses and credits between the Murphy School and  
6 other CUNY units are now being established with CUNY  
7 Community Colleges Academic Policy and a Course  
8 Catalog is being established for the new school.  
9 Regarding the Labor Advisory Board, to accommodate  
10 the change from an Institute of Labor Studies to the  
11 CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies, Murphy's  
12 Labor Advisory Board has been expanded to include  
13 representatives of community organizations and the  
14 board has been reconstituted as a Labor and Community  
15 Advisory Board. In the areas of branding, marketing  
16 and communications, a website for the new school is  
17 under development and is expected to be launched  
18 sometime next month, May 2018. New logos have been  
19 designed and are under consideration, new promotional  
20 material is being designed, a student communication  
21 system is being developed as well as a media  
22 strategy. With regard to student services, the  
23 Murphy Staff is collaborating with the University  
24 Office of Student Affairs to provide accessibility,  
25 veterans in career services to students who will be

1  
2 enrolled in the CUNY School of Labor and Urban  
3 Studies. A contract with Baruch College is under  
4 negotiation that will provide the School of Labor and  
5 Urban Studies students with a full range of Library  
6 Services through Baruch's Library. Murphy's own  
7 special labor and industry collection will remain at  
8 43<sup>rd</sup> Street and will be available to Baruch students  
9 with special services provided. Colleagues, the  
10 process of transitioning the Murphy Institute to the  
11 new school of Labor and Urban Studies involves the  
12 series of Administrative and Technical Tasks as you  
13 would imagine. The new school must provide a way to  
14 perform complex administrative functions such as  
15 Finance, Student Records and Human Resources.  
16 Because new schools like Murphy often start small but  
17 must still perform all the functions of a larger  
18 school, the new school must decide which functions  
19 and services it can provide effectively and  
20 efficiently and which should be provided in  
21 partnership as a shared service with another office  
22 within CUNY either at the graduate center or the  
23 central office. This shared services model allows  
24 the new school to provide it's students with high  
25 quality services while the school grows in size and

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2 expertise. As of this time, the new school of Labor  
3 and Urban Studies has agreements with the CUNY  
4 Central Office for the following shared services:  
5 Registrar, Budget, Procurement and Accounts Payable  
6 and Human Resources. Each of these areas has a part-  
7 time staff person to coordinate between the central  
8 office and the new school. The new school is  
9 currently reviewing options for the Bursar function  
10 because the number of students is still small,  
11 Financial Aid Services will remain with the graduate  
12 center for the time being. With regard to  
13 recruitment and admissions, the new school will  
14 manage these functions starting in the Spring 2019  
15 semester. Technical tasks are a major part of the  
16 transition. As many of you know, CUNY uses an  
17 integrated information system to manage all business,  
18 administrative and enrollment management function, an  
19 IT team has been assigned to do the technical work  
20 that will transition the Murphy Institute into the  
21 CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies. The Data  
22 Processing Systems CUNY First DegreeWorks Hobsence  
23 (SP?) that are essential to managing the  
24 administration of a self-standing school will be  
25 operational by the end of August. The IT team has

1  
2 finished the requirements gathering process and is  
3 now building the work-flow tables, we expect IT to be  
4 fully operational by August. New and continuing  
5 students have all been informed of this transition  
6 and new and incoming students will be able to  
7 register for the new school for the upcoming fall  
8 semester. So Council Members that concludes the  
9 technical portion of my testimony but I am immensely  
10 proud what our faculty, staff, elected officials,  
11 labor leaders and the central office have been able  
12 to accomplish, particularly in the past year in  
13 creating the new school set to open again with the  
14 name CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies in fall  
15 of 2018. Despite our progress, many challenges  
16 remain including fundamental ones in areas ranging  
17 from setting priorities to achieving goals to getting  
18 the school on firm financial footing by growing  
19 enrollments and securing other funding streams but we  
20 are convinced that the new school will deliver on  
21 it's promise to make outstanding contributions to  
22 knowledge and thought. Just last month, CUNY  
23 Distinguished Professor Joshua Freeman, jointly  
24 appointed by Murphy and Queens College published  
25 (24:36)

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION JOINTLY WITH COMMITTEE  
ON CIVIL SERVICE AND LABOR

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date           <INSERT TRANSCRIPTION DATE>